

INSIDE TODAY

U.S. NEWS

TEA TIME



A demonstrator wearing a skeleton costume holds a sign as the Tea Party Express makes a stop at the Utah State Capitol in Salt Lake City on Tuesday, March 30, 2010.

Read more on Page A4

SPORTS NEWS

CASTER'S BACK



Caster Semenya says she will return to competitive racing this season, releasing a statement on the same day that she was denied a chance to run at a meet in South Africa because the IAAF has yet to release its findings from her gender verification tests.

Read more on Page A12

OIL

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French President Nicolas Sarkozy President Barack Obama are seen during a news conference in the East Room of the White House on Tuesday, March 30, 2010, in Washington.

Associated Press

Obama, Sarkozy push for UN sanctions against Iran

ANGELA CHARLTON

BEN FELLER

Associated Press Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — With the president of France at his side, President Barack Obama declared Tuesday he hopes to have international sanctions against Iran in place “within weeks,” not months, because of its continuing nuclear program. He acknowledged he still lacks full support at the United Nations.

“Do we have unanimity in the international community? Not yet,” Obama said. “And that’s something that we have to work on.”

Obama said he and French President Nicolas Sarkozy are “inseparable” in their thinking on the subject.

For his part, Sarkozy told reporters, “Iran cannot continue its mad race” toward acquiring nuclear weapons.

“The time has come to take decisions,” Sarkozy

said.

Iran insists its nuclear program is for civilian purposes, not nuclear weapons.

On the U.N. Security Council, veto-holding permanent members Russia and China have expressed reservations toward a tougher set of sanctions, as have several of the rotating members who do not have veto powers.

Obama said he understands that countries that have business ties with Iran, especially those who depend on Iran for oil, might have reservations.

Still, Obama said that, while “the door remains open if the Iranians choose to walk through it,” there have been no signs that they are close to moving back from their nuclear program, and patience has all but run out.

“My hope is that we are going to get this done this spring.

Continued on Next Page



This photo provided by the U.S. Marshals Service shows David Brian Stone Sr., 44, of Clayton, Mich. The changes in David Brian Stone’s personal theology destroyed his marriage, his former wife says, and prosecutors claim they later led him to hatch a plot to kill police officers and spark an uprising against the government.

Associated Press

Feds: Christian militia needed to be ‘taken down’

COREY WILLIAMS
MIKE HOUSEHOLDER

Associated Press Writers

DETROIT (AP) — It started inside a trailer home in rural Michigan, where a small family gathered before bed for prayer. Years later, the private devotions had evolved into a small militia of “Christian warriors” preparing to fight the Antichrist.

The changes in David Brian Stone’s personal theology partly destroyed his marriage, his former wife says, and prosecutors claim they later led him to hatch a plot to kill police officers — a violent act the militia hoped would touch off an uprising against the government.

Continued on Page 3

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U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton responds to a question from the media during the closing press conference at the G8 Foreign Ministers' Meeting at the Chateau Cartier in Gatineau, Quebec on Tuesday, March 30, 2010.

OBAMA

Continued from Front Page

So I'm not interested in waiting months for a sanctions regime to be in place. I'm interested in seeing that regime in place in weeks."

Earlier Tuesday, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton predicted new sanctions would be forthcoming, hinting that skeptical nations such as China and Russia eventually

Associated Press would come along. At the conclusion of an international meeting of eight major powers in Quebec, Clinton cited a growing alarm around the world about the consequences of a nuclear-armed Iran.

Obama and Sarkozy met privately in the Oval Office and later planned dinner at the White House with their wives, Michelle Obama and French first lady Carla Bruni-

Sarkozy.

Obama said he and the French president discussed a wide range of global issues, including the financial regulatory overhaul and peace negotiations in the Middle East.

Sarkozy also said he stands with the United States in condemning recent Israeli settlement activity in east Jerusalem.

While his own commitment to Israel's security is well known, Sarkozy said, the settlement activity in lands claimed by the Palestinians "contributes nothing."

Sarkozy praised Obama for trying to engage the two sides in peace talks. Sarkozy said that the "absence of peace" in the region "is a problem for all of us" that feeds terrorism around the world.

On a subject on which the two presidents do not see eye-to-eye, Sarkozy expressed a widespread European contention that the award of a \$35 billion U.S. Air Force refueling tanker plane was

rigged to favor U.S. aerospace giant Boeing over an alliance of Europe's Airbus and the U.S. Lockheed-Martin company.

Sarkozy said he believed it would be "fair to share this contract with the Europeans" instead of awarding it solely to Boeing.

Obama said that while "the process will be free and fair," the final decision would be made by Defense Secretary Robert Gates.

"The secretary of defense makes procurement decisions. The president does not meddle in these decisions," Obama said. Obama hailed France as one of the United States' oldest and best allies, noting the two countries have fought together on battlefields from Yorktown in the U.S. Revolutionary War to Afghanistan now.

However, the two have had clear differences on Afghanistan, with the Obama administration pressing France as well as other European nations to send more troops, and Sarkozy so far resisting

such requests.

Obama did not go into Tuesday's meeting intending to urge Sarkozy to send more troops, White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said ahead of the meeting. "There's no specific 'ask' on the table," Gibbs said at his daily news briefing.

Instead of troops, Obama will seek more French military or police trainers, according to two Western diplomats who spoke on condition of anonymity because the presidential discussions were private.

French trainers have been among those killed in Afghanistan this year, and polls show most French voters do not support the effort.

Both presidents went to extraordinary lengths to defuse trans-Atlantic speculation of a chilly relationship. Obama repeatedly referred to Sarkozy by his first name and spoke fondly of his trip to Paris last year. "We respect one another and understand one another," Obama said. □



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FED: CHRISTIAN

Continued from Front Page

"The time had come that we needed to arrest them and take them down," U.S. Attorney Barbara McQuade said Tuesday in an interview with The Associated Press.

Prosecutors believe that Stone, 44, is the ringleader of the Hutaree militia, a name the group's Web site says they created to mean "Christian warrior."

He was among eight members arrested during a series of weekend raids in three Midwestern U.S. states, which federal officials said they carried out after monitoring the group since last summer and learning they planned to launch their attack next month.

A ninth defendant — Stone's son, Joshua Matthew Stone — turned himself in late Monday night following an hours-long standoff with FBI agents and police near a wooded area southwest of Detroit the group had used for training. He and the others face charges that include seditious conspiracy, or plotting to levy war against the U.S.

Each of the suspects has requested a public defender, and bond hearings are scheduled for Wednesday.

Donna Stone, 44, said her ex-husband created the legal problems now faced by her stepson, Joshua Stone, and her 19-year-old son, David Brian Stone Jr., by involving them in a militia that grew out of his faith.

"I honestly feel, and think, their dad never told either of those boys what they were getting into," she said. "This a bunch of garbage, these charges. There is no way my son would do these things."

Donna Stone said she met David Brian Stone in the late 1990s in a grocery superstore where she worked. He courted

her and soon afterward, she and her son, Sean Stetten, moved into his small trailer in Lenawee County, near the Ohio state line. The boys were raised as brothers, and David Brian Stone legally adopted Sean, whose name was changed to David Brian Stone Jr.

Both boys were home-schooled and at night, the family would pray together.

"David would preach out of the Bible," said Donna Stone, who said she was married to David Brian Stone for about six years. "He would start at the beginning of Genesis and go to Revelations.

He didn't get into Revelations because we didn't agree on it. David said it was supposed to be different. He had his own views. That's when I thought it was time for me to go."

The Hutaree Web site quotes several Bible passages and declares: "We believe that one day, as prophecy says, there will be an Anti-Christ. ... Jesus wanted us to be ready to defend ourselves using the sword and stay alive using equipment."

Chip Berlet, a senior analyst with Political Research Associates, a think tank based in Somerville, Massachusetts, said Hutaree's online writings suggest the group fits into a Christian apocalyptic ideology that believes the U.S. government is "in league with Satan" and "the chief agent of Satan is the Antichrist."

"In this particular reading of

U.S. Attorney Barbara McQuade speaks to the Associated Press in Detroit, Tuesday, March 30, 2010. McQuade, leading the prosecution against nine members of a Midwest Christian militia, said authorities "needed to arrest them and take them down." McQuade said that federal investigators had been watching the Michigan-based Hutaree group for some time and felt compelled to act based on an imminent threat against police. The nine face seditious conspiracy charges after weekend raids in Michigan, Ohio and Indiana.

Associated Press

apocalyptic prophecy, there's a huge battle between good and evil," said Berlet, whose group studies right-wing extremists.

"Powerful, political elected officials ... are conspiring with Satan to build a one-world government."

McQuade downplayed the role religious ideology played in the group's alleged plans, saying the "most troubling" finding of their investigation into the Hutaree were the details of their alleged plot. Prosecutors have said the militia planned to make a false police emergency call, kill responding police officers and then use a bomb to kill many more at the funeral.

"What we were focused on here is their conduct, not on their religion. And what they have talked about is being very anti-government," McQuade said. □



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Obama takes care in sizing up 'tea party' movement

By JENNIFER LOVEN

AP White House

Correspondent

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama stepped carefully when talking for the first time about the conservative tea party movement, acknowledging it has legitimate concerns about federal reach and spending, but he contended the core of the loose anti-government network is “on the fringe.”

The latest political phenomenon, barely a year old, has leaders on both sides of the political spectrum puzzled.

Republicans want to co-opt the passion — and votes — of tea party disciples to help them oust Democrats from congressional control in the fall midterm elections, without losing other voters in the process. As for Democrats, they have focused mainly on trying to marginalize and ignore them. For instance, several Democratic officials say there’s no apparent strategy yet at the White House for combatting the



Tea party supporters crowd at the “Showdown in Searchlight” tea party rally in Searchlight, Nev., Saturday, March 27, 2010.

network’s growing influence. But the leaderless coalition, born in communities from coast to coast shortly after Obama’s inauguration last year, seems to have some staying power.

A Washington Post poll taken last week showed that more

people view the movement favorably than unfavorably — and that 62 percent believe it has either the right amount or not enough influence on the Republican Party.

The group is decidedly conservative and libertarian, but otherwise diverse, divided over most everything except the need for limited

government, less spending and an end to Obama’s policies. Those in the coalition have allegiance to no political party, with independent voters and even moderate Democrats among their ranks.

All that was reflected in Obama’s cautious handling of the topic, when asked about it Monday by a television

interviewer.

The president said on NBC’s “Today” show that the movement is built around a “core group” of people who question whether he is a U.S. citizen and believe he is a socialist. Beyond that, however, he said he recognizes that the movement involves people with “mainstream, legitimate concerns” about the national debt, government expansion and big spending.

“I wouldn’t paint in broad brush and say that everybody who is involved or have gone to a tea party rally or meeting are somehow on the fringe,” Obama said. “I think that there’s a broader circle around that core group of people who are legitimately concerned about the deficit, who are legitimately concerned that the federal government may be taking on too much.”

He said he hopes that as “we’re tackling things like the deficit, imposing a freeze on domestic spending, taking steps that show we are sincere about dealing with our long-term problems, that some of that group will dissipate.”

Obama has talked a lot recently about anger in the electorate, particularly in the wake of the surprise victory in Massachusetts by Republican Scott Brown for a Senate seat. But it was the first time he had talked specifically about the group. Some Democrats close to the White House think it may be a good thing for Obama and his team to mostly keep their distance. Engaging tea party activists too directly or aggressively could backfire by energizing them even more, many think. The administration knows the tea party movement could help Republicans in the short-term by increasing the intensity of their voters. But the White House also is betting the activists’ influence could also be harmful, by yanking GOP candidates to the right — and farther away from the middle-of-the-spectrum voters who can decide elections, according to one official close to the president. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal administration thinking. □

Associated Press

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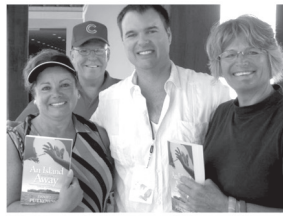
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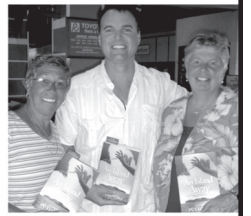
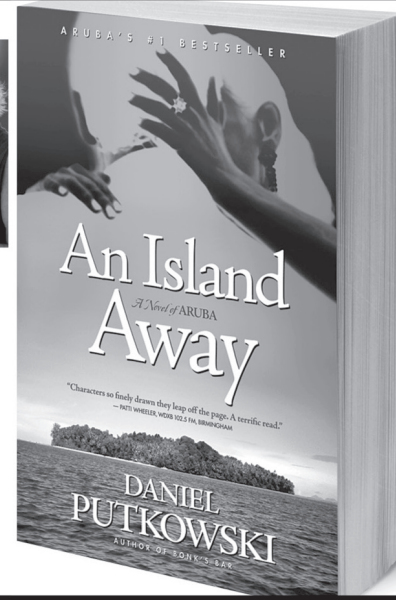
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Records fall across Northeast along with the rain



A car sits submerged in the parking lot of the Warwick Mall on Tuesday, March 30, 2010 in Warwick, R.I. The mall is adjacent to the Pawtuxet River which crested earlier in the day after heavy rainfall.

Associated Press

PROVIDENCE, Rhode Island (AP) — Rainfall records are being set across the U.S. By Tuesday afternoon,

Northeast as a storm pounds the region for a second day.

Plane pilot dies after crash into building

ROANOKE, Virginia (AP) — The pilot of a single-engine plane that crashed into the side of a Virginia United Postal Service Freight building has died.

Spokeswoman Allison Buth says 59-year-old Peter Sheeran died at a hospital after Tuesday's crash near Roanoke airport in western Virginia.

She says passenger John Whitmer is in serious condition. Both men are from Charlottesville.

There were no other injuries.

Roanoke County Fire spokeswoman Jennifer Conley Sexton says the plane was taking off just before 1 p.m. Tuesday when it hit power lines, crashed into the corner of the building and then burst into flames.

Airport spokeswoman Sherry Wallace says Sheeran reported a problem with the Piper to air traffic controllers shortly before the crash. □



Providence, recorded more than 15 inches of rain for the month, becoming the rainiest of any month on record. The previous record for the rainiest month was set in October 2005.

Boston set a record for the

month of March, topping a mark set in 1953, with nearly 14 inches (35.5 centimeters) of rain. It is now the second rainiest month since recordkeeping began in 1872.

New Jersey and parts of New York City also set March

records. Rainfall totals reached record levels in Central Park for March. Monthly rainfall approached record levels in Portland, Maine.

The latest deluge is the second major rainstorm in the region this month. □

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U.N. delays Benazir Bhutto assassination report



A Pakistani man, right, looks out of his car window while driving past a carpet bearing the image of Pakistan's slain leader Benazir Bhutto, displayed for sale along with other carpets on the side of the road in the old city of Rawalpindi, Pakistan, Wednesday, March 17, 2010.

EDITH M. LEDERER
Associated Press Writer

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on Tuesday accepted a request from Pakistan's

Associated Press president to delay the release of a report on the assassination of his wife, former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, until April 15. U.N. spokesman Martin Nesirky made the announcement just

two hours before a three-member U.N. commission that investigated Bhutto's death was scheduled to hold a press conference to discuss the report's findings.

Nesirky said he did not know why Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari made the request, which was received at the U.N. overnight.

But Pakistan's presidential spokesman, Farhatullah Babar, said the country had requested the delay so the commission could attempt to question two heads of state who he said had called Bhutto before her death warning her of "serious threats to her life."

He declined to say which heads of state he was referring to, saying it would be unethical. It was unclear why the commission had not spoken to them.

"This can make the report more

credible," he told the AP in Islamabad.

Bhutto was killed in a Dec. 27, 2007, gun and suicide-bomb attack as she was leaving a rally in the garrison town of Rawalpindi, where she was campaigning to return her Pakistan People's Party to power in parliamentary elections.

The government at the time of Bhutto's murder, led by President Pervez Musharraf, blamed Baitullah Mehsud, a Pakistani militant commander with reported links to al-Qaida. Officials at the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency also said Mehsud was the chief suspect. But Bhutto's party repeatedly hinted that Musharraf and his allies were involved and demanded a U.N. probe, claiming it was the only way the whole truth would be revealed.

The secretary-general agreed to appoint a commission to assist Pakistan by determining the facts and circumstances of Bhutto's death and it began work on July 1, 2009.

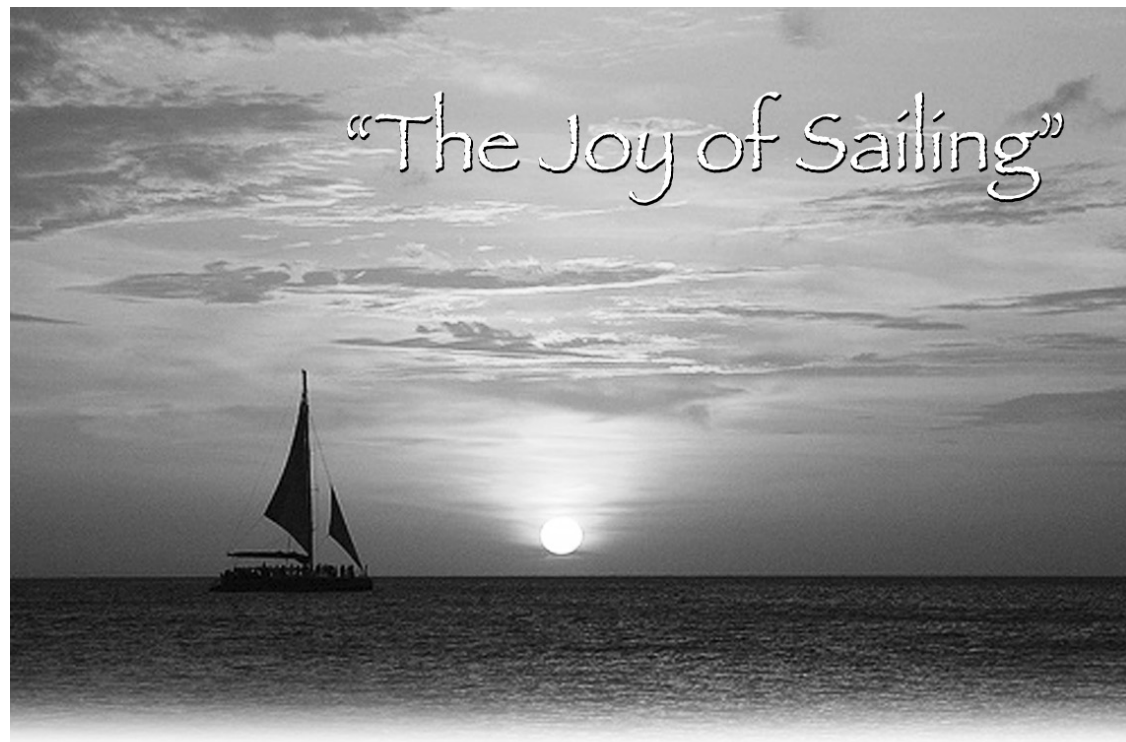
Nesirky said the commission informed Ban that "all relevant facts and circumstances have been explored and the report is now complete and ready to be delivered."

The three-member commission is led by Chile's U.N. Ambassador Heraldo Munoz, a dissident during the dictatorship of Gen. Augusto Pinochet. Munoz declined to comment on the delay.

The other members are former Indonesian attorney general Marzuki Darusman, now a member of the National Commission of Human Rights, and Ireland's former deputy police commissioner Peter Fitzgerald, who headed the initial U.N. inquiry into the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri in 2005.

Under terms agreed to by the U.N. and the Pakistani government, the commission was to determine facts and circumstances but Pakistani authorities would determine any criminal responsibility.

Zardari succeeded Musharraf as president in September 2008 and when Ban visited Pakistan in February 2009 the president told government officials: "We believe the commission's findings will eventually expose the financiers, the organizers, the sponsors and the conspirators of this terrorist act and bring them to justice." □



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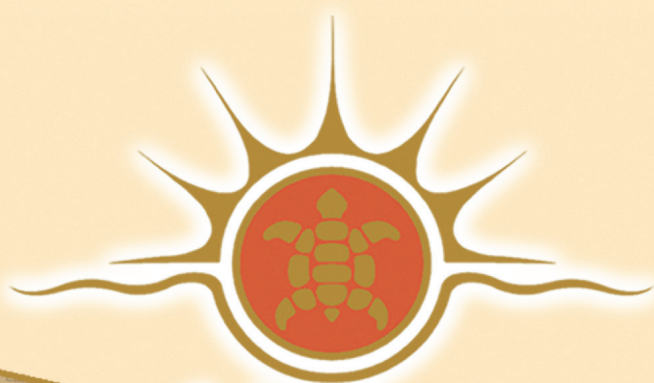
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2 detained for dead babies found along China river

CHI-CHI ZHANG

Associated Press Writer

BEIJING (AP) — The bodies of 21 babies, some with hospital identification tags around their tiny ankles, washed ashore on a river in eastern China and two mortuary workers were detained for allegedly dumping them.

News footage Tuesday showed the babies — at least one of whom was stuffed in a yellow plastic bag marked “medical waste” — strewn along a dirt riverbank near a highway overpass. A few wore diapers. All were caked in mud. Some of the babies appeared several months old, while the official Xinhua News Agency said the bodies included fetuses.

Local residents and firefighters recovered the bodies Monday after they were discovered under a bridge spanning the Guangfu River on the outskirts of Jining in Shandong province. Interviews with residents who made the grisly find were broadcast on the Web site of the Shandong Broadcasting Company. One said he thought a body was a toy, but then he spotted several others. Another expressed concern because the river is a source of drinking water for villagers living nearby.

Hospital ID tags on eight of the babies helped investigators trace them back to the Affiliated Hospital of Jining Medical University, Xinhua reported.

Hospital mortuary workers Zhu Zhenyu and Wang Zhijun were sacked and taken away by police, Xinhua said, citing Jining government spokesman Gong Zhenhua. The babies' families had paid the pair to dispose of the bodies, but they instead dumped them at the river.

It was not clear whether Zhu and Wang dumped the bodies directly in the river or if they made an attempt to bury them.

Three top hospital officials were sacked or

suspended and the government ordered the Jining Municipal Health Bureau to make a public apology, Xinhua said.

“It exposes a serious loophole in the hospital’s management and indicates a lack of ethics and legal awareness of some hospital staff,” Gong was quoted as saying. “It exerts a very negative impact on society and teaches us a profound lesson.”

Reports said the babies ranged in age from newborns to several months old. One of the bluish-green identification tags visible in the news video says, “Boy; mother’s name is Man Hongmei; born in April 2009.”

The reports did not give the number of girls or boys. Xinhua said the bodies of the 21 babies were cremated, though it was not clear whether they had all been identified.

In China, most families are permitted to have only one or two children and a traditional preference for sons runs strong. The abandoning, aborting and killing of newborn baby girls is common in rural China, although gender-selection abortions are illegal.

Infants who die from disease are often abandoned or buried in unmarked graves, not being old enough to be formally considered part of the family. But those deaths usually occur in small numbers.

An official from the information office of China’s Health Ministry said she was not aware of the case, while telephone calls to the Jining Health Bureau and the Shandong Health Bureau rang unanswered Tuesday.

More than 1,000 comments were posted on Netease, a Chinese news Web site, within hours of reports on the discovery of the bodies.

“These people are completely without conscience and morals and should be shot,” one comment said. □



In this image made off March 29, 2010 video, bags are seen on a riverbank on the outskirts of Jining in Shandong province, eastern China. The bodies of 21 babies, believed dumped by hospitals, have washed ashore on a riverbank in eastern China, state media reported Tuesday, March 30, 2010.

Associated Press

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Putin talks tough after Moscow subway bombings



Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin chairs a meeting on the double suicide bombings on Moscow subway held in the Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk, Monday, March 29, 2010. Putin, who built much of his political capital by directing a fierce war with Chechen separatists a decade ago, vowed Monday that “terrorists will be destroyed.”

LYNN BERRY, Associated Press Writer
MOSCOW (AP) — The old Vladimir Putin is back, confronting a terrorist attack in Moscow by using the same kind of coarse and colorful language that helped him win the presidency a decade ago. A day after twin suicide bombings in the subway that killed 39 people, the powerful prime minister told Russians that he is certain

the masterminds of the attacks would be found. The security services have blamed extremists from the North Caucasus, a predominantly Muslim region in southern Russia that includes Chechnya.

“We know they are lying low, but it is already a matter of pride for the law enforcement agencies to drag them out of the sewer and into broad daylight,” Putin said, directing

a transportation security meeting that was shown on Russian television Tuesday.

The choice of the gutter language recalled Putin’s famous threat to “wipe out the Chechen rebels in the outhouse” after they were blamed for a series of apartment building bombings that terrorized Moscow in 1999. Putin, as prime minister at the time, sent in overwhelming military force to pound the region into submission and was elected president the following year.

Now in his second stint as prime minister after serving two full terms as president, Putin has an excuse to revert to the tough line that shored up his authority following past terrorist attacks. While welcomed by many Russians, it also is raising fears that civil liberties may be further sacrificed under the pretext of fighting terrorism.

Capitalizing on the outrage, members of the Kremlin-loyal parliament proposed bringing back the death penalty for terrorism. Russia has imposed a moratorium on capital punishment, but has been reluctant to outlaw it due to broad public support for the

death penalty.

Monday’s subway bombings, carried out by two women, are the first terrorist attacks in Moscow in six years. They have shaken a city that has been insulated from the violence still raging in the restive southern corner of the country.

Russia observed a day of mourning Tuesday, with flags at half-staff at the Kremlin and across the vast country. Relatives identified the dead at a Moscow morgue, and tearful commuters placed candles at makeshift memorials heaped with carnations inside the two stricken subway stations in the city center.

Heightened transportation security remained in effect across the capital and elsewhere. Police with machine guns and dogs patrolled subway entrances.

The attacks signaled to Russians that they are no safer than they were before Putin came to power.

No one has claimed responsibility for the attacks, but many speculated that they were retaliation for the recent killings of Islamic militant leaders in the North Caucasus,

including one known for training suicide bombers.

Putin used a string of terrorist attacks in 2004 to consolidate his power further. He abolished gubernatorial elections, effectively giving the Kremlin the power to appoint governors, and pushed his liberal critics out of parliament. Since then the political opposition has been fully marginalized.

Many opposition leaders and human rights activists said they feared the subway bombings would be a convenient excuse for the government to put increased pressure on the opposition, perhaps by cracking down even harder on street protests. “Our government loves to use such events to act as they want,” Lyudmila Alexeyeva, a veteran human rights activist, wrote in her blog. “So this is an excellent opportunity to further limit our constitutional freedoms, pretending they care about our security.”

Lidia Yusupova, a Chechen rights activist, was more alarmist.

“The system will have its hands untied completely,” she told The Associated Press. “There will be a crackdown on all walks of life. We have no rights now, but we will have even fewer soon.”

While Putin appears eager to meet the challenge the attacks have posed to his rule and reassure Russians the situation is under control, he has so far shown no inclination to impose harsh, new measures. And it is not at all clear what more the government could do.

In the North Caucasus, the security services and police have been ordered to step up their campaign to eliminate the leaders of the Islamic insurgency, seen by many Muscovites as the right response to the attacks.

“This is the revenge of the Chechens,” said Yekaterina Afanasyeva, a 26-year-old nurse who nervously rode the metro Tuesday. “We should carry on with a very tough policy in the Caucasus, probably even tougher. Nothing of the kind would have been possible under a dictatorship.” □

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Colombian rebels free soldier held for 12 years

CESAR GARCIA

Associated Press Writer

FLORENCIA, Colombia (AP)

— A Colombian soldier held hostage for more than 12 years was freed by rebels Tuesday and flown to this city, ending an ordeal that prompted his father to hike halfway across the country wearing a symbolic chain around his neck to press for his son's release.

Sgt. Pablo Emilio Moncayo was one of the longest-held hostages of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, or the FARC. He was 19 when taken captive during an attack on a mountain outpost on Dec. 21, 1997.

Moncayo returned to government territory on a Brazilian helicopter that flew to an unannounced spot in southern Colombia where the rebels turned him over to a humanitarian team led by Colombian Sen. Piedad Cordoba.

The soldier smiled warmly as he stepped out of the helicopter in military fatigues and extended a hand urging his family to slow down as they excitedly rushed toward him. He embraced his father, mother and sisters, who carried white flowers.

Moncayo was generally in good health, said Adolfo Beteta, spokesman for the International Red Cross.

His father, high school teacher

Gustavo Moncayo, walked more than 620 miles (1,000 kilometers) across Colombia in 2007 to rally support for his son's release. He wore a chain around his neck and wrists like those used at times by the rebels to bind their prisoners.

"My heart is going a thousand an hour," the father had said on the airport tarmac when the helicopter took off to retrieve Moncayo. The family had been anxiously awaiting his release since the FARC first announced last April that it planned to set him free.

The Super Cougar helicopter loaned by Brazil carried a team led by Cordoba and including Red Cross officials and a priest. Both the flight's departure and return were delayed by rain.

Before the helicopter flew back, the Colombian government's peace commissioner, Frank Pearl, criticized the Caracas-based TV channel Telesur, which is funded in part by Venezuela's government, for releasing photos and videos of Moncayo together with Cordoba. Telesur did not say when the images of Moncayo — both in a military uniform and separately with Cordoba — were made.

Pearl said there had been an agreement the handover would be discreet, and "the government rejects that a media outlet like Telesur lends

itself to do propaganda for a terrorist group." There was no immediate response from Telesur.

The guerrillas freed another soldier, 23-year-old Pvt. Josue Calvo, on Sunday, in their first release of a captive in more than a year.

Cordoba, an opposition senator who has been a go-between in contacting the FARC, said the guerrillas say that after Moncayo they will end their unilateral releases and press the government to negotiate a swap of jailed rebels for remaining captives.

President Alvaro Uribe has called the FARC's unilateral releases publicity stunts and has opposed a prisoner swap unless any guerrillas who are freed agree to abandon the rebels.

The rebels still hold at least 20 police officers and soldiers, including Libio Jose Martinez, a 33-year-old sergeant who was captured during the same battle as Moncayo — a raid on a communication post at an elevation of 12,470 feet (3,800 meters) on Patascoy mountain. At least 20 soldiers were captured during the attack but most were freed in 2001.

Hostage releases by the FARC have usually occurred within weeks of the group announces its plans. This time, freedom for Moncayo and Calvo was



Relatives welcome hostage Pablo Moncayo, center, as he arrives to the airport in Florencia in southern Colombia after being released by rebels of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, FARC, Tuesday, March 30, 2010. Sgt. Moncayo was kidnapped after a rebel attack on a military mountaintop communications post in Dec. 1997.

Associated Press

delayed for nearly a year while the rebels and government accused each other of holding up the handover.

Uribe, who leaves office in August after two consecutive four-year terms, is hugely popular in Colombia for aggressively fighting the FARC and dealing it crushing blows, including the 2008 rescue of former presidential candidate Ingrid Betancourt, three U.S. military contractors and 11 other captives.

The leftist FARC, the Western Hemisphere's last remaining major rebel army, has fought

for nearly a half-century to topple a succession of governments.

Colombia's armed forces chief says he believes the FARC was behind a bombing in the administrative center of the Pacific port of Buenaventura last week that killed nine people.

Political analyst Leon Valencia, a former leftist guerrilla, said the FARC is trying to focus on its military efforts and has "a lot of interest in finishing with that issue of kidnapping, which has caused so much pressure" for it. □



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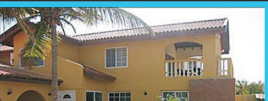
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Michael Jackson's father plans wrongful death suit

By Bob Tourtellotte

LOS ANGELES (Reuters) – A lawyer for Michael Jackson's father said Tuesday he intends to file a wrongful death lawsuit against the late pop star's doctor within 90 days, claiming the physician's actions amounted to murder.

Brian Oxman, who represents Joe Jackson, said the amount of the powerful anesthetic propofol given to the "Thriller" singer by Dr Conrad Murray before Jackson's death on June 25, 2009 "was reckless, and it amounts to second-degree murder."

"The continuous administration of drugs over six weeks -- he (Murray) gave him propofol every night -- that is Russian roulette, that is loading six bullets into a gun with only six chambers," Oxman told Reuters.

As part of a criminal investigation, prosecutors have charged Murray with involuntary manslaughter in the death of Jackson, 50, who had been rehearsing for a series of concerts in London before his death. Murray had been hired by concert promoter AEG Live to care for Jackson in the months leading to the London shows.

The wrongful death lawsuit would be a civil lawsuit, which can run in parallel with the criminal suit. The criminal suit can result in a jail sentence whereas the civil lawsuit's main purpose is winning monetary damages against a defendant.

Los Angeles officials have ruled the death a homicide caused by "acute propofol intoxication" at a level

that was equivalent to that used for anesthesia during "major surgery."

Jackson had been taking propofol for insomnia, and Murray has admitted administering the drug to him the day he died. Murray has said he did nothing wrong and has pleaded not guilty to involuntary manslaughter.

The singer also had other sedatives in his system including lorazepam which contributed to his death, the Los Angeles County Coroner has concluded.

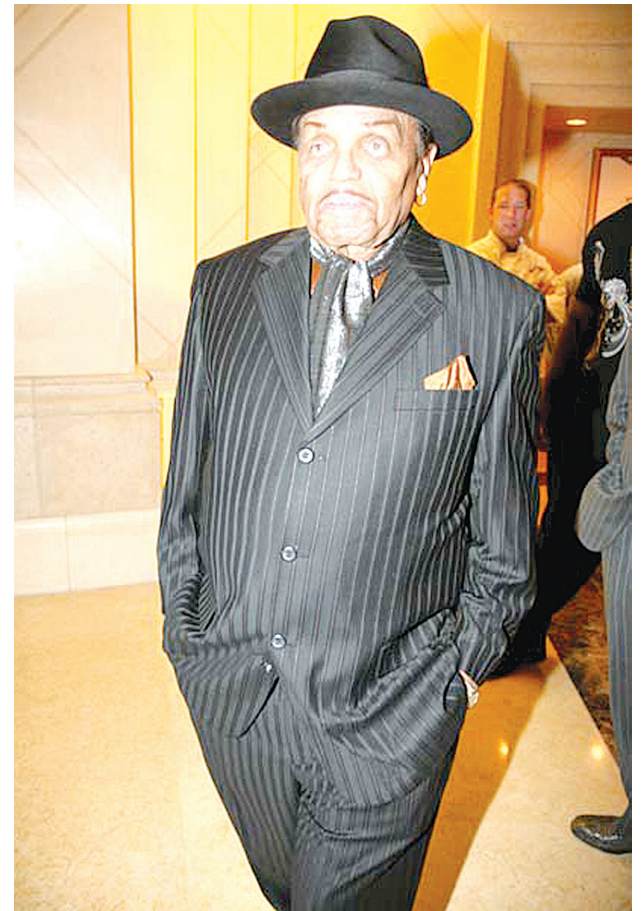
Oxman said private investigators have been piecing together evidence and testimony, and his group has concluded that Murray bears responsibility.

He said California law requires anyone filing a wrongful death lawsuit to do so within one year of a person's death and to give the defendant 90 days' notice before the filing.

Oxman said Joe Jackson decided to notify Murray's lawyer, Houston-based Ed Chernoff, now to meet the one-year requirement because the anniversary of his son's death is 90 days away and because it has taken this long to gather evidence.

"Having records, instead of just speculation, has been very important and hard to do, but we (now) finally have the records so we can tell what happened," Oxman said.

A spokeswoman for Chernoff said he had not yet received the notice and would have no comment until he had seen it.



Oxman said it was not yet clear if other Jackson family members, including mother Katherine Jackson who is a beneficiary of her son's multimillion dollar estate, will join in the lawsuit. □

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BUSINESS

Aruba TODAY

Stocks waver after upbeat economic data

By STEPHEN BERNARD,
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK — The stock market moved closer to closing out another strong quarter with a modest advance Tuesday.

The Dow Jones industrial average added 12 points for its fourth straight gain.

The mood in the market was upbeat after a report that consumer confidence grew more than expected in March, although it's still well below historical levels that indicate a strong economy. A separate report showed home prices inched higher for the eighth consecutive month.

Analysts expect trading to be erratic Wednesday because of the end of the January-March quarter. At the end of a quarter, institutional investors typically engage in what's known as window dressing, or trades intended to boost returns on reports sent to shareholders. Many also refrain from big moves. Tuesday's volume was also light as many traders took the day off for Passover or in advance of Easter.

A slow, steady climb higher in stocks over the past two months is also giving investors reasons to collect some profits at the end of the quarter.

"A bout of profit-taking would be normal and expected after the rise we had," said Mitch Schlesinger, managing director of FBB Capital Partners in Bethesda, Md. With one day left in the quarter, the Dow Jones industrial average is up 4.6 percent for the period. That's a sizable gain and puts the market on pace for a strong year.

The day's economic reports provided new evidence that the economy is improving, albeit slowly. Other reports in recent weeks have signaled that a recovery is continuing. The Dow has risen in 19 of the

past 23 days and is now at its highest level since September 2008.

The Conference Board said its consumer confidence index rose to 52.5 in March, from 46.4 last month. Economists polled by Thomson Reuters had forecast it would rise to 50.

While the reading would indicate improvement, it is far from signaling a healthy economy. A reading above 90 means the economy is on solid footing.

"We're starting to see consumers come back in an adequate manner," said Larry Rosenthal, president of Financial Planning Services in Manassas, Va. "Not strong, but adequate."

According to preliminary calculations, the Dow rose 11.56, or 0.1 percent, to 10,907.42. The Dow was up as much as 44 points in morning trading.

The Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 0.05, or less than 0.1 percent, to 1,173.27, while

the Nasdaq composite index rose 6.33, or 0.3 percent, to 2,410.69.

Advancing stocks narrowly outpaced those that fell on the New York Stock Exchange, where volume came to a light 907.1 million shares compared with 944.9 million shares Monday.

The Standard & Poor's/Case-Shiller home price index, which measures home values in 20 major metropolitan markets, rose 0.3 percent in January compared with the previous month. It was the eighth consecutive monthly gain. The index is up nearly 4 percent from its low in May 2009, indicating that home prices are starting to recover.

The index was down 0.7 percent compared with the year-ago period, slightly better than the 0.8 percent drop forecast by economists.

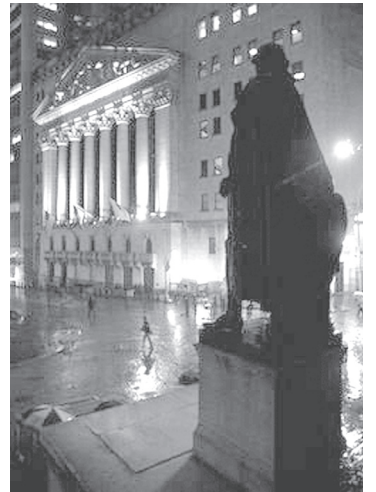
Unlike other parts of the economy, the housing market has been less consistent in its recovery. Reports on sales, defaults and prices have shown

an uneven rebound.

Investors have been tolerant of the erratic housing reports, and instead focused on the strength of the consumer and jobs data. Analysts say stocks and consumer confidence won't be able to push higher without evidence that the job market is improving.

The Labor Department releases its monthly employment report Friday. Economists expect it to show employers added 190,000 jobs in March, only the second increase since the recession began in late 2007. Some of the jobs growth is expected to be tied to temporary government hiring for the 2010 census. The stock market will be closed for Good Friday when the report arrives.

Investors will get another snapshot of jobs on Wednesday from a report by payroll company ADP. Economists forecast ADP's report will show private-sector employers added 40,000 jobs in March. The ADP report is seen as



People walk through the rain past the New York Stock Exchange in New York early on Tuesday, March 30, 2010. A second major storm in less than a month continued to drench the east coast as forecasters predicted 'dangerous flooding'. A statue of George Washington is at right.

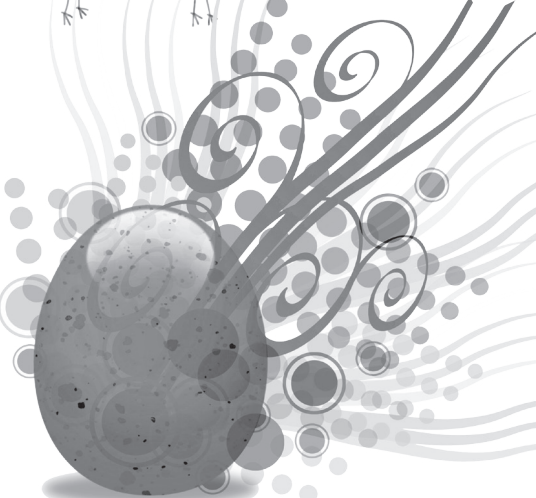
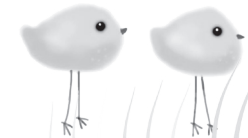
(AP Photo/Peter Morgan)

an early indicator of the Labor Department's data, though there are often wide variations.

In corporate news, Apple Inc. and Verizon Communications climbed after reports that Apple was making phones that could be used on Verizon's network. □

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SPORTS

Aruba TODAY

Roddick reaches quarterfinals at Key Biscayne

STEVEN WINE

AP Sports Writer

KEY BISCAYNE, Florida (AP) — Andy Roddick advanced Tuesday to the quarterfinals at the Sony Ericsson Open by beating Benjamin Becker 7-6 (4), 6-3.

Seeded sixth, Roddick improved to 23-4 this year, and he leads the men's tour in wins. He's seeking his first Key Biscayne title since 2004 and hoping to spoil a potential showdown Sunday between Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal.

Roddick has played basketball with Dwyane Wade for laughs, as were brief get-togethers with Terrell Owens, a friend and tennis fan. The Chilean benefit is a doubles match



Andy Roddick of the United States, follows through with a serve to Benjamin Becker, of Germany, during the Sony Ericsson Open tennis tournament in Key Biscayne, Fla., Tuesday, March 30, 2010.

Associated Press

in which Roddick will take part Saturday — the evening before the men's final.

"Even if things go great and I'm in the final, I'll still play Saturday, just because it's necessary and what needs to happen," he said. "It's a bigger cause than my tournament."

Three-time champion Venus Williams became the first women's semifinalist by beating No. 6-seeded Agnieszka Radwanska 6-3, 6-1. To get past the unseeded Becker, Roddick rallied on the strength of his dominating serve. He dug out of a 1-4, love-40 hole in the first set and won 34 of his final 39 service points, including all six in the tiebreaker.

Roddick said experience helped with the turnaround.

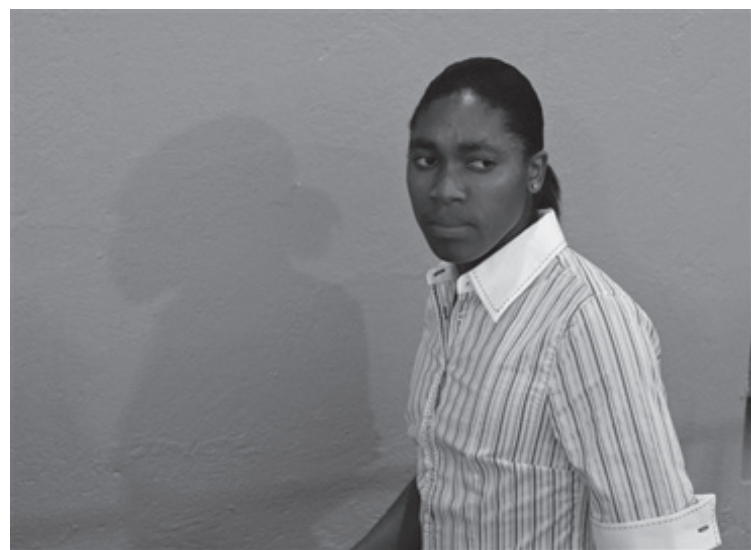
"When things aren't going my way, I'm probably better now," he said. "Six years ago on the court my highs were a lot higher, and the lows were a lot lower. If I would have gotten down early, I don't know if I would have stayed the course."

A big serve helps, too. When Roddick found himself in another hole serving at 4-5, love-30, he responded with three service winners and an ace.

"It's nice at love-30 to be able to make some first serves," he said.

Roddick made another one on match point, closing out the victory with his seventh ace of the match and his 343rd of the year, second-most on the tour.

Continued on Page 15



South African Caster Semenya at an athletics competition in Stellenbosch, South Africa, Tuesday, March 30, 2010. Caster Semenya says she will return to competitive racing this season, releasing a statement on the same day that she was denied a chance to run at a meet in South Africa because the IAAF has yet to release its findings from her gender verification tests.

Associated Press

GERALD IMRAY

AP Sports Writer

STELLENBOSCH, South Africa (AP) — Caster Semenya says she will return to competitive racing this season, releasing a statement on the same day that she was denied a chance to run at a meet in South Africa because the results from her gender verification tests have not yet been released.

The 19-year-old Semenya, who has not raced or spoken publicly since she won the women's 800-meter race at the world championships in Berlin in August, said Tuesday that she has not done anything wrong and should be allowed to race.

"I hereby publicly announce my return to athletics competitions," Semenya said. The IAAF is still reviewing

Semenya announces return to competitive running

the test results to determine the South African runner's eligibility. The organization has refused to confirm or deny Australian media reports that the tests indicate Semenya has both male and female sex organs. Although there is no ban or suspension preventing Semenya from competing, it is thought that she had agreed not to race until the IAAF releases its findings.

"I am of the firm view that there is no impediment to me competing in athletics competitions," Semenya said. "I will however continue to assist the IAAF with whatsoever they may require for their own processes and in this regard I have instructed my legal and medical team to work closely with, and continue negotiation with them for these purposes." Earlier Tuesday, Semenya was denied a spot to race at a meet in Stellenbosch, near Cape

Town, despite pleas from her coach and lawyer to let her compete.

Although she was in Stellenbosch, she refused to talk about her situation.

"Why would I want to talk to media?" Semenya told The Associated Press. "I don't want to talk to you."

Semenya's lawyer later spoke to The AP, however, saying there has been no agreement with the South African athletics federation for the runner to refrain from competing until the expected June release of her test results by the IAAF.

"We are not stopping her as lawyers," Greg Nott said. "I think she would love to (compete before June). That's for her to answer and her coach. She came ready to race tonight. This action today was about saying: 'It's time for the power to be given back to the athlete, which is Caster.' "What we want is Athletics

South Africa to come out in full support of the athlete, Caster, and we want the IAAF to understand completely the position where we are and the frustration of Caster. Somebody's got to give and we are pushing that."

It was unclear from Semenya's statement when she would make her return.

"My coach, agent and I will work closely together to identify and prepare for a limited number of athletics meetings over the course of the coming athletics season," Semenya said.

Meet organizer Richard Stander said Semenya was "not comfortable with" the situation surrounding her eligibility.

"Caster said she was not happy. She wants to participate. She wants to perform," Stander said. "She is a performer. ... She doesn't have the opportunity to do that at the moment." □

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Buffalo Sabres defenseman Tyler Myers (57) receives congratulations from teammates Jason Pominville, left, and Andrej Sekera after his first-period goal against the Boston Bruins during their NHL hockey game in Boston, Monday, March 29, 2010.

The Associated Press
BOSTON (AP) — Tyler Myers scored a goal and set one up for Paul Gaustad to lift the surging Buffalo Sabres to their sixth win in seven games with a 3-2 victory the Boston Bruins on Monday night. Ryan Miller made 40 saves,

Associated Press

NHL Roundup

Sabres hold off Bruins 3-2

including Marco Sturm's penalty shot in the first period, in a matchup of last month's USA Olympic goaltenders.

Boston goalie Tim Thomas, Miller's backup at the Vancouver Olympics, was pulled following the Sabres' third goal and left the ice to jeers. He was making his second straight start after shutting out Calgary on Saturday.

Tim Kennedy also scored for Buffalo, which moved one point behind Pittsburgh for second overall in the Eastern Conference.

David Krejci and Dennis Seidenberg scored Boston's goals. The Bruins, who remained in eighth place in the East after Carolina defeated Atlanta 4-1, lost for the third time seven games.

Hurricanes 4, Thrashers 1

At Atlanta, Carolina goalie Cam Ward made a brilliant return after being out nearly two months and Erik Cole scored a decisive goal with 4:11 left as the Hurricanes beat the Thrashers, dealing a blow to Atlanta's playoff hopes.

Jussi Jokinen scored twice for Carolina, including an empty-net goal after the desperate Thrashers pulled Johan Hedberg for an extra skater with more than 2 minutes left. Atlanta missed a chance to pull even with Boston for the final playoff spot in the Eastern Conference.

Jokinen's first goal broke a 1-1 tie in the second period, and Cole finished off the Thrashers by ripping a shot past Hedberg after Ward had turned away Atlanta's repeated chances. Ward made 26 saves in his first contest since Feb. 3, having missed 19 games with a back injury.

Predators 3, Panthers 2, OT At Sunrise, Florida, Francis Bouillon scored a minute into

overtime to lift Nashville over the home team.

David Legwand and Patric Hornqvist also scored for Nashville. Keith Ballard and Stephen Weiss had third-period goals for Florida, which lost its third straight game.

Scott Clemmensen stopped 22 shots for the Panthers and Dan Ellis made 27 saves for the Predators.

Clemmensen got the start in favor of Tomas Vokoun, Nashville's former goalie, who has won just one of his past seven games.

Ducks 3, Stars 1

At Anaheim, Nick Bonino scored his first NHL goal with an assist from 600-goal scorer Teemu Selanne, and Curtis McElhinney made 30 saves in the Ducks' victory over Dallas.

Corey Perry and Kyle Chipchura scored 49 seconds apart in the second period as the Ducks won for the sixth time in eight games to move level with Dallas and Minnesota in 11th place in the Western Conference standings. All three clubs trail Colorado by nine points for the final playoff spot.

Loui Eriksson scored his 28th goal and Kari Lehtonen stopped 43 shots for the Stars, who lost two of three in California to end a four-game road trip.

Wild 3, Kings 2

At St. Paul, Martin Havlat scored a power-play goal in the third period to earn Minnesota's win.

Owen Nolan and Brent Burns also scored for Minnesota, which kept its remote playoff chances alive.

In other NHL matches it was: Buffalo 3, Boston 2; Carolina 4, Atlanta 1; Nashville 3, Florida 2, OT; Minnesota 3, Los Angeles 2; and Anaheim 3, Dallas 1.

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RODDICK

Continued from Page 12

He has been broken only once through three matches and next plays No. 33-seeded Nicolas Almagro, who eliminated No. 27 Thomaz Bellucci 6-4, 3-6, 7-6 (3).

The woman with the best chance to beat Venus Williams at Key Biscayne watched the women's quarterfinals from the photo pit. Serena Williams had no camera but used her connections to secure a front-row seat as she watched her sister beat Radwanska.

Top-ranked Serena has been sidelined by a knee injury since winning the Australian Open in January. In her absence, Venus has become the woman to beat as she bids for her fourth Key Biscayne title and her first since 2001.

"When I'm executing and playing my best, it's great," Venus said. "It feels good, and I feel like I'm definitely dictating the points and that I don't give my opponent as many chances to have a say."

The oldest women's quarterfinalist at 29, Venus is the hottest player on the WTA Tour. She has won 14 matches in a row, and two more would give her three consecutive tournament titles for the first time since 2002.

In the men's fourth round, Mardy Fish retired with a sciatic nerve injury trailing Mikhail Youzhny 6-1, 1-0. The injury occurred when Fish took a tumble in the first set, causing discomfort from his back to his calf.

"I don't think I've ever felt that much pain on a tennis court," said Fish, who is coming back from knee surgery last September.

No. 5 Robin Soderling beat No. 9 Fernando Gonzalez 6-0, 6-7 (3), 6-2, and No. 8 Jo-Wilfried Tsonga swept No. 12 Juan Carlos Ferrero 6-2, 6-2.

The No. 3-seeded Williams hit eight aces and lost only five points on her first serve. She broke five times, including in the pivotal eighth game, when Radwanska had consecutive



Venus Williams of the United States, returns the ball to Agnieszka Radwanska, of Poland, during the Sony Ericsson Open tennis tournament in Key Biscayne, Fla. Tuesday, March 30, 2010.

Associated Press

double-faults and then hit a 62-mph knuckleball serve that Williams pounced on to whack a winner.

Williams struggled with her backhand but won 15 of 19

points at the net.

"I play my best game when I'm more aggressive, because that's my style," she said.

"Others don't play as well as aggressive, because that's not

their style. It just seems to be better when I move forward, and I try to do that."

Radwanska, seeded sixth, fell to 4-18 against top-five players. □

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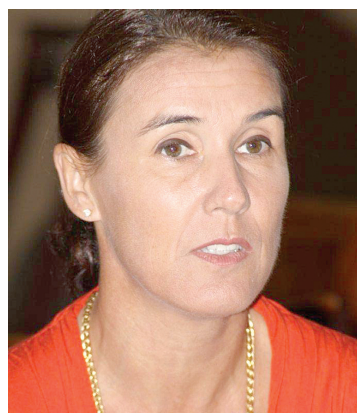
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First Aruba International Symposium geared toward improving assistance to community

Celebrating April as Autism Month

The International Day of Autism is on April 2nd



ORANJESTAD — The first Aruba International Symposium on Autism is organized in light of the international observation of Autism in the month of April. This is what Aruba Autism Foundation President Monique Kuiperi stated. The foundation is organizing its first international event geared

toward expanding knowledge and service to individuals and families affected by autism. The symposium, with renowned international speakers will be held on April 16 through 18 at the Westin Resort.

"April is Autism Awareness Month in the US. The International Day of Autism is on April 2nd," says Kuiperi. "Our foundation organized a number of activities in the past years, to focus attention of autism and thus help make the community aware on the phenomenon. Even though we have the desire to annually organize activities such as the Autism Walk in Aruba and also bike rides, the foundation decided this year to dedicate

all energy in organizing the symposium which will have a much bigger impact."

According to Mrs. Kuiperi, the Aruba Autism Foundation will celebrate its fifth anniversary in June this year, and looks back on successful efforts to make the Aruba society aware of autism and how it is affecting a large number of families and individuals. Therefore the foundation deems it timely to provide additional and ample information on autism, by ways of an international symposium. The main goal of the conference is to elevate the knowledge on autism among professionals in Aruba. Parents and individuals are dependent of services and guidance provided by professional, who need to remain abreast of the latest techniques and information on autism. Invited speakers will elaborate on themes that are of important for all stages in the life of a person with autism, for birth to adulthood. Medical doctors, educators, paramedics and professionals who work in the social field as well as parents will learn the latest development in treatments, medicine, nutrition and advocacy. "We urge everyone to make use of this opportunity, as we are bringing to Aruba top experts who will discuss a variety of issues that can be of help for our community," says Tasha Britten, project coordinator of the Aruba Autism Foundation.

The four workshops are designed to give practical information and guidance on valuable issues. Dr. Claudine Dietz of the Netherlands for instance is geared toward medical doctors, and deals with early detection of



autism. Dr. Dietz uses the latest methods applicable in the Netherlands; Specialized educator Joke Groeneboer, also from Holland will elaborate on various ways how to teach autistic children in normal class settings; Dr. Miguel Santana, a Dutch raised, Aruba-born psychiatrist will guide the workshop on autism in adolescence and adulthood, particularly on sexuality and personal relations; and Curaçao therapists Inge Boutier and Yolanda Wiel will share their knowledge and experience on how to guide and help children affected with autism learn how to development social-emotional skills, through fun activities. The lectures will be on Peer Relations and Others at School; Biomedical Treatments; Community Involvement; Nutrition; the CARD program; the Pathology of Language and Speech; and Self Advocacy. "The entire program is designed to give participants a better understanding of

autism. This will increase the chances to detect autism at a very young age, and thus, implement a timely and effective treatment which will improve the quality of life for those affected by autism," Kuiperi emphasizes.

Aruba Autism Foundation is in the process to arrange accreditation for medical doctors and everyone who completes the three-day program will receive a certificate.

Costs for local participation are 125 florins for the three days or 75 florins for one day. People from Curaçao and Bonaire who are interested to partake in the symposium pay the same price as locals.

There is also an option to have a lunch at the Westin, at a price of 23 dollars per person.

Aruba Autism Foundation says it will keep the community informed on the lectures and themes. For more information, contact the foundation at 588-1179 or visit the website www.autismoaruba.org.

First International Autism Symposium ARUBA 2010

Place: The Westin Aruba Resort

Date: April 16th -18th 2010

Registration: www.autismoaruba.org

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Pictured attached with Patrick Dempsey are Jackie Raccuglia, manager e-commerce & marketing for Holiday Inn Resorts Aruba & Jamaica (left) and Pieralberto Raccuglia, general manager of Candlewood Suites Miami (right).

ORANJESTAD - Holiday Inn Resorts Aruba & Jamaica were among the many proud sponsors of The Dempsey Challenge, a non-competitive race in which participants are challenged to cycle, run or walk to raise funds in support of The Patrick Dempsey Center for Cancer Hope & Healing. The Dempsey Center provides free support, education and wellness services to cancer patients, survivors and

caregivers. The event held recently in Lewiston, Maine raised more than \$1 million.

The inaugural Dempsey Challenge attracted a maximum 3,500 participants from 32 states and four countries, and 600+ volunteers. Dempsey participated in the 50-mile ride alongside professional cyclists George Hincapie, David Zabriskie, Stephen Roche and Ted King, as well as members of the Holiday Inn Resorts Aruba & Jamaica cycling team. Dempsey created the event as a fundraising vehicle for the Dempsey Center and to promote physical activity as an important part of daily life.

For 2010, The Dempsey Challenge will be expanded to a two-day event. Run/walk races will cover distances of five-kilometers (3.1 miles) and 10-kilometers (6.2 miles) on Saturday, October 2. Cycling races will extend

10, 25, 50 and 100-miles on Sunday, October 3.

Participant caps of 4,000 have been set for the run/walk and 3,500 for cycling. Participants are encouraged to create or join teams through the Dempsey Challenge website (<http://dempseychallenge.org>) to assist their fundraising efforts. Volunteer information and registration will be available through the Challenge website on March 1, 2010.

"Cancer impacts one in three Americans, so we all have a stake in this fight," said Raul Villagran, director of sales and marketing for Holiday Inn Resorts Aruba & Jamaica. "We're proud to have contributed to the success of this wonderful event as part of our ongoing commitment to give back to the communities where our guests live and work, as well as those where our resorts are located."

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Sun Plaza receiving a total facelift



ORANJESTAD -- Sonia Kelly, Sun Plaza Property Manager and Reynald Geerman, General Manager IDI CONSTRUCTION had the pleasure of inspecting the facelift and paint-job



currently taking place at Sun Plaza Commercial & Business Center

Sun Plaza, Aruba's foremost Business Center offering tenants quality management, superior office facilities and ample parking, contracted IDI CONSTRUCTION for the purpose of giving the building a total refresh.

After a number of different color tests IDI Construction



got the go-ahead for Orange Fireworks and Sun God Yellow, two colors which best bring out the outstanding architectural structure and the building's eye-pleasing symmetry.

The IDI CONSTRUCTION crew showed up at the site, on the agreed day, at

the agreed hour, pressure washed all areas destined to be painted, fixes all blemishes and cracks, applied a durable sealer, then two coats of quality paint, on time, on budget, and with great professional expertise to guarantee the good looks of the building over the next years. □

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At Tierra del Sol Resort, Spa & Country Club

Body & Soul Spa goes organic



WEST PUNT – Body & Soul Spa recently made the decision to switch its product line from classic cosmetics to contemporary organic. The new, carefully selected organic line of spa cosmetics is Equavie, a brand guided by a natural vision of beauty and an aim for authenticity. “Equavie,” says spa manager Orly Valor, “is not just certified organic, it is also certified BIO, which is the highest level of organic classification given by the COSMEBIO charter, requiring products to sustain

at least 95 % natural-origin ingredients.” The switch to superior products includes masks, facial creams, oils, lotions, in line with the latest global trends advocating a sustainable and more natural approach, maintaining a healthy environment, as the key to preserving the future. “At Body & Soul,” reiterates Orly, “The emphasis is not just on beautiful, but also on healthy, which motivated us to seek the guidance of WTS, International spa consultants, in repositioning the spa,

and tweaking its menu of treatments.” Besides using Equavie at the spa, products made of olive oil, cotton seed extract, shea butter, strawberries, and green tea will also be available for sale at the reception. Body & Soul Spa, a sanctuary within Tierra del Sol, is designed to nourish bodies, revitalize minds and enhance well being. The facility offers indulgences from head to toe with an array of soothing and healing treatments. The spa’s



professional staff offers massages, body wraps, skin and body treatments, aromatherapies, hydrotherapy, manicure and pedicure and a full service hair salon, maintaining the use of Kérastase products.

With over 4,000 square feet of pampering, the spa features three couple treatments rooms, one single room, and three comfortable mani-pedi chairs, in a cozy, dedicated wing. The outdoor garden features retreat areas as well as a private whirlpool; men and ladies’ private locker rooms include dry sauna, wet steam and power shower, and lockers provide terry robes, spa slippers and towels; personal amenities are provided along with complimentary beverages

and teas. The spa makes yoga classes available in the garden, 4 times a week - Wednesday 8.15 a.m., Tuesday & Thursday 6.30 p.m., Saturday 8.30 a.m., and features majestic views of the ocean, golf course and the famous California Lighthouse while working-out in the fitness studio, boasting strength conditioning equipment, free weights and a complete selection of cardiovascular equipment. There are specials for local residents and monthly specials for members and homeowners, just drop in any time during opening hours, Monday to Friday 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Sunday 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. □

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As announced during its General Assembly

AHATA will expand its role in contributing to Aruba's tourism success



ORANJESTAD – During its annual spring assembly of members, the Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association (AHATA) demonstrated a united front among its members as well as with the public sector in moving forward with the island's tourism goals. Honorable Minister of Tourism, Transportation and Labor Otmar Oduber, who was the keynote speaker at the Assembly, expounded on a



vision shared by AHATA in securing a dedicated marketing fund and in executing cohesive, uninterrupted marketing actions that will ensure the island's position as a top tourism destination. Other guest speakers included Dr. Ryan Peterson, of the University of Aruba, who further emphasized sustainable tourism as an essential pathway to the island's future success. "We are embarking together upon a new voyage of private and public sector co-operation," commented AHATA CEO and President James Hepple on the agreement signed between the government and AHATA in relation to the Aruba Tourism Management Fund (ATMF). "The Minister and his team

should be congratulated for their vision and forward thinking, and the AHATA Chairman and Board of Directors should equally be congratulated for their contribution to this process. It is my belief this will be a successful venture, one beneficial to our membership, to our tourism sector and to Aruba as a whole."

As well as contributing its formidable tourism industry knowledge, with its members representing the movers and shakers of the industry, AHATA will also contribute its input as the government sets out to establish an independent Aruba Tourism Authority (ATA). As of the first of July, the 2% contributed by member hotels will no longer come to AHATA, but to the ATMF with marketing actions carried out as of January first by an independent ATA.

"In 2011, it is projected that the amount dedicated to marketing will be US\$28 million, some 37% higher than the base amount for this year. AHATA, through its three-member representation on the ATMF board, will utilize its knowledge base to help ensure the successful



promotion of Aruba's tourism product overseas," explains Hepple. Along with providing marketing input and monitoring of marketing performance of the ATMF and the independent ATA, AHATA will continue to serve its members through advocacy and other member services. On behalf of its members, AHATA will continue to feedback with the government on issues including beach management, environment, safety and security, taxation

and labor concerns. The Aruba Hotel and Tourism Association is a private non-profit, trade organization with 124 member companies, representing over 6,000 hotel and timeshare guestrooms, and a wide range of tourism-related businesses. AHATA's core mission is "To Achieve Sustainable Growth for Aruba's Tourism Industry". AHATA members benefit directly through AHATA's marketing, advocacy and member support services. □

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Satisfy Your Desire

Human desire is a tangible sensation that drives us to expand and grow. The problem arises when we become fixated on the desire itself, which only empowers the feeling of wanting. We don't understand the concept of desire, so we don't know how to use it as a tool. We make the mistake of focusing on the sensation of desire itself, instead of the driving force it provides.

Desire shows you how your spirit wants to express. It is

your spirit talking to you. Desire helps you determine what direction to take, and what to strive for. When we use our desire to guide our lives, we follow our spirit's lead, and we fulfill our exact purpose in life. Nothing brings greater joy and satisfaction than fulfilling your life's purpose.

When we don't follow our desires, we are sidetracked away from our True Path. Life tends to pull us off our path, to distract us from

the point of our lives. As life progresses, we tend to get stuck in situations that don't allow us to grow. Immediate responsibilities seem to always outweigh the importance of pursuing our desires.

Humanity is not taught the concept of using Desire as a tool to stay focused on your true path. We have no idea how to relate to our desire, how to interact with it or how to use it. We are not taught to think of the sensation of desire as an entity unto itself.

As a conscious entity, Desire seeks to preserve its own life, and to create conditions in which it can thrive. The moment we get what we want, our Desire dies. As long as we do not have what we want, Desire will live.

Desire keeps us from what we want, to insure its own survival.

We focus on the sensation of Desire because it is tangible, and the longing demands our attention. Although it is natural, focusing on the desire is the opposite of what we should do. When we focus on the sensation of wanting, we empower Desire, which brings us energetically further from our goal. Focusing on Desire creates lack in our lives.

Instead, we must focus on the sensation of abundance. We can use the energy of Desire to help us define our goals and to drive us to achieve them, but we must stay focused on the sensation of abundance in order to eradicate our Desire.

Until Tomorrow...

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each day.


~**Quentin Danziger**

Quentin has over 20 years experience balancing what we refer to as the Real World, with science and spirit. He has held positions of responsibility and authority, received a Bachelor of Science in Engineering Physics from Colorado School of Mines, and has also studied many avenues of alternative thought.

HumanHints is the culmination of his knowledge, experience and practice. These free daily emails detail concrete, real-world techniques to consciously create any future you choose, while in the throes of daily life created by outdated modes of thought.

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PG	BROOKLYN'S FINEST		6:00	8:45
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PG	VALENTINE'S DAY		6:30	9:00
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On the eve of the restaurant's 10th anniversary

Amazonia Churrascaria introduces a new dining option

Palm Beach – The crew at Amazonia Churrascaria is gearing up for the restaurant's 10th anniversary. Almost one decade ago, the authentic Brazilian concept of Rodizio Steakhouse offering continuous dining caught literal fire as a troop of waiters armed with mega skewers started roaming the colorful and friendly new indoor & outdoor dining room of Amazonia Churrascaria, introducing a fresh and novel style of dining to enthusiastic locals and visitors.

Having enjoyed instant success, Amazonia Churrascaria became a household name, a favorite place for family gatherings, celebrations or just great food. "Now, after ten years," says Hubert Solagnier, restaurant manager, "it is time for a new product, an a la carte option, designed to satisfy small eaters, and patrons with distinct menu favorites."

Diners may now opt for the traditional, continuous parade of gauchos, slicing more than 14 cuts of grilled beef, chicken, lamb, pork & sausage, or a new a la carte dinner option, where their favorite skewer – from Grilled Pineapple, to Parmesan Pork, Filet Mignon Wrapped in Bacon, Lamb Chop, or the Mixed Amazonia Skewer with

tenderloin and vegetables, and the Passion Skewer with six jumbo shrimp -- is delivered to the table, seasoned to perfection and slow roasted over open flame, in the restaurant's signature style.

Both dining styles are accompanied by an extravagant forty-item, frequently changing seasonal salad bar where patrons can keep sampling until they beg for mercy, and a delicious array of tasty sides. With two choices, an all-inclusive feast and an a la

carte delight, diners can now better tailor the Amazonia Churrascaria culinary adventure, to their liking, combined with the restaurant's extensive award-winning Wine Spectator wine list, well stocked bar and terrific selection of Cuban cigars.



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Kate and Richard Jaffe celebrated 10th Wedding Anniversary



EAGLE- As the Sun set on the Azure Aruban horizon Kate and Richard Jaffe celebrated their 10th wedding anniversary by renewing their vows next to the Fofoti Trees on picturesque Eagle Beach on March 24, 2010.

Kate and Richard originally met in Philadelphia, PA in November, 1997 and after a whirlwind romance were engaged in March, 1999 when Richard proposed to Kate under the moonlit sky on the sandy white beaches of Anse

Marsel, St. Martin. With their love for romantic beach moments they were joined by their respective parents and married in Maui, Hawaii on March 19, 2000.

Now residing in Media, PA with their beautiful daughters, Brianna, 8 and Jolie, 5, Kate and Richard wanted to commensurate their love for each other once again and renew their love for each other in their new “home away from home” Aruba.



With the help of wedding planner Lissy Lampe of Ceremonies & Celebrations in Aruba and Bella Aruba Photography, Kate and Richard were able to share their love with flower girls Brianna and Jolie as the sun set on another beautiful Aruban day. The

couple and their beautiful daughters then went to the “reception” at the wonderful Passions Restaurant on Eagle Beach where they also shared a Champagne toast and fabulous wedding cake. □

Photos by Angela Munzenhofer



Stars of Tomorrow Launches Search for Local Music



ORANJESTAD – ‘Stars of Tomorrow’ is a new TV show being produced by Ateliers 89 for ATV. At it’s heart, the show aims to develop the local youth interested in acting &



directing professionally for television.

The students first learn the skills required to either act or direct, and then they are given the opportunity to put those skills straight to use making and acting in the TV show, which premieres on ATV in May. Now ‘Stars of Tomorrow’ extends yet further opportunity now to the local music talent of Aruba with it’s ‘music promotion’.

“We are very excited to announce our Stars of Tomorrow ‘Music Promotion’, comments TV show producer Ben Steel. “There is a large pool of local talent in the Aruban music scene, and we want to help these musicians, composers, bands, and singers get exposure!”

The production team of ‘Stars of Tomorrow’ want to include as much locally produced music as possible in the TV show, and have put out a call to all local musicians to send in their CDs.

Ben continues, “My aim would be to have every single



piece of music used in our TV show to have be written and performed by the talented local artists, whether that be an instrumental piece, a punk rock track, or a vocal ballad. There really isn’t a limit at all to what we are searching for, any genre, any length; it’s up to the local musician!”

If you’d like to participate in the ‘Music Promotion’, all you have to do is sent your CD to: Stars of Tomorrow ‘music promotion’, ATV, ROYAL PLAZA, ARUBA. Make sure to write your name and contact

information on the actual CD. Last Day for submissions is April 21st.

Are you a singer? Are you in a band? Or perhaps you compose your own music? Don’t miss out on this amazing opportunity to promote your music and get exposure!

For more information and to register contact Elvis Lopez - Call: 565 4613 or Email: elvis@ateliers89.com Media or press inquiries please contact Maria Silva - Call: 593 2880 or Email: vibrationpr@gmail.com

Aruba’s favorite new restaurant at Palm Beach Plaza



Owner Victor Nataf in collaboration with his food and décor savvy sons Daveed and Gregory recently opened their newest island restaurant affiliated to the



popular Casa Tua Barcelona in Oranjestad and Casa Tua Pizzeria on Palm Beach.

Casa Tua Mediterrannée’s professional kitchen crew to present rich and varied mezethes for tastings, a selection of Greek, Spanish and Arab appetizers against the musical backdrop of Angela Croes’ fla-

menco music gorgeous dancers. Casa Tua Mediterrannée offers a contemporary Mediterranean style. The décor by Daveed Nataf features dark wood, straight-lined furniture, on the outdoor wrap-around terrace and in the air-conditioned dining room.

Rave reviews about the food, and caring personalized service, make this new place a perfect spot for people who love to live, and love to eat and party! Join us tonight at Aruba’s Newest Restaurants and Bar right in Palm Beach Plaza!



MENU SPOTLIGHTS

Traditional dishes from Greece such as the famous Tzatziki (yogurt & cucumber dip) , Dolmaki (stuffed wine leaves), Moussaka (eggplant, lamb meat, béchamel sauce melted cheese and cinnamon) From Tunisia and Morocco egg Brecka, Couscous (lamb, beef and veggie stew with our special Ras el Hanout spices), Ganaouia (beef and okra stew) Beef , lamb and chicken kebab

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Absurdly wasteful food packaging



By Julie Gerstein

Plastic and shrink-wrap and Styrofoam, oh my! When you go to the grocery store, do you regularly encounter products that are practically drowning in packaging? Foods begging to be freed from their clam-shell containers?

We've packaged ourselves into a corner -- product packaging often has a shelf life that's much longer than the product itself. Packaging distances the consumer from the product (how do you know what those grapes are really like if you can't touch them?) and creates millions of tons of waste.

How can you fight the powers that package? Be aware about the products you buy. Purchase items in bulk and create individual portions yourself. And when possible, ask for items without a bag or box. Yes, it's really that easy. We've compiled some of the absolute worst offenders below. Are we missing something? Tell us in the comments!

individual snack-size boxes. To get the same effect, purchase a large box of raisins and apportion them daily in a snack-size reusable container. Even worse -- these Sunsweet prunes, which are unnecessarily individually wrapped and packaged in a plastic tube

Organic and health foods

Shockingly, some of the most egregious packaging wasters are organic and healthy lines, which attempt to woo consumers with "convenient" individual serving sizes

Single portion packages

Supermarket shelves are stocked with wasteful individually portioned items, which require tons of extra plastic and packaging. Are we really too lazy to scoop out a single serving of rice ourselves?

Instead -- buy a large version of the item and make your

own snack-size version using a reusable container. And again, buy in bulk whenever possible.

Pickles

One of our strangest finds - - individually packed cups of pickle chips. Why?

Lunch foods

A lot of packaging goes into producing foods that are convenient for consumers -- items made for eating on the go. The Lunchables snack pack includes six individually wrapped (and highly processed) items. And oneMarie Callender's dish even comes with its own incredibly wasteful disposable colander.

For a healthier, cheaper and less wasteful meal, try making your lunch ahead of time. Check out the great lunch ideas in the The Daily Green's recipe archive. □

Packaged cheese

No surprise here -- some of the most overpackaged cheeses also happen to be some of the most processed.

Are bite-sized niblets of individually wrapped cheese really necessary? Instead, cut up fresh cheeses on your own!

Raisins and prunes

Raisins are often sold in



Aruba TODAY

Don't drink & DRIVE

Spring to the Sea

By: Dr. Carlos Viana

Spring in Aruba means a mass migration to the seaside. Not talking tourist here. I am describing neighbors who stay far away from the ocean the whole year, but then are moved to spend the week "camping" by the ocean. Do not believe for a moment that this is a local tradition. People have been drawn to the sea for fun, health and revitalization since ancient times. Plato, the Greek philosopher said, "The Sea cures all ailments of man." Plato as well as Hippocrates, the father of modern medicine, often prescribed bathing in the sea as a health treatment.

Most of us know that a trip to the sea makes us feel "new." Why? First, the ocean air is filled with negative ions. Countless studies have been done on how negative ions clean dust and therefore reduce symptoms of allergies, counteract negative effects of smoking, and increase the flow of oxygen to the brain; resulting in higher alertness, decrease drowsiness, and more mental energy. Wow, all that from going to the ocean?

Do you know that sea water contains all the 104 minerals and trace elements present in human serum, or plasma? So powerful are the effects of the sea water on the human body, mind and spirit that a rejuvenating therapy known as Thalassotherapy, from the Greek words, "Thalasso" for sea; and "therapy" for treatment has been practiced

since well before the 1800's when the French coined the word. So, soaking in the ocean or if you're not lucky enough to live near the ocean, a sea salt bath, is a therapy that allows the skin to absorb and benefit from ocean minerals. As a complimentary physician and a medical anthropologist, I realize that this urge to go to the sea in springtime, is a primal urge to clean ourselves from the past so that we can be reborn.

I recommend whenever possible, that parents take their children to the ocean to clean their sinuses. Ocean water is a natural antihistamine that helps clear up mucus secretions. It is a powerful antihistamine that does not make you drowsy and has no negative side effects. Antibiotic do not help fight viruses. However, nearly all viruses will succumb to sea water and natural sunshine.

I believe in the healing power of the sea so strongly, that I developed a "Water" therapy for our patients who are swollen with edema. I call this treatment "Head out Immersion". The number of people in our community taking diuretics, or drugs to remove excess body fluid or edema is staggering. Many people think if they are suffering from edema they have too much water in the body and do not drink fluids. Actually, edema actually is one of the signs of dehydration or that

the body is trying to dilute a poison. The fluid swelling arms and legs is salty water that can be replenished with fresh, healthy water.

I supervise my patients who want help to move out this "dirty" water by having them drink more water and sit in the ocean. Before leaving your house measure the thickness of your legs. Drink a liter (quart) of water and go to the beach. Sit in the water for forty minutes with the water up to your neck with your head out of the water, your arms and legs underwater. If you also have hypertension you will leave the water, get home and realize that you are ready for a sound nap. Our Head Out Immersion produces positive results and here at Viana Healing Center we have seen this easy procedure work small miracles with swollen bodies. By the way, you know that diuretic you are taking? It does remove some body fluid and potassium, but leaves the salt behind, which means you are going to swell up faster. The head out immersion also removes your excess body salt. Meanwhile, the potassium you have lost is a very important mineral for the proper function of all cells, tissues, and organs in the human body. If you are taking a diuretic it is important to replace the lost potassium. Many foods contain potassium, including all meats, some types of fish, such as salmon, cod, and flounder, and many fruits,

vegetables, and beans.

Another "Hydro" (water) therapy and a great way to detoxify your organs and hydrate your body is by having your colon washed. Colon Hydro-therapy is an extended and more complete form of an enema. Colon hydrotherapy involves the gentle infusion of warm filtered water into the rectum by a trained therapist or Natural Physician, using no chemicals or drugs. The out flowing water removes excess gas, mucus, infectious material and feces. It is the natural solution to conditions, which interfere with the normal functions of the colon. We get extra request for this treatment in our clinic, especially after holiday binging, or when beginning a weight loss or other health program or as a "spring cleaning". Many patients state that they feel reborn after this therapy.

Get the Point! If you are blessed as we are to live by the ocean, one of the best 'cures for all ailments' is free. If you are lucky enough to vacation by the sea, take full advantage of it natural healing properties. When you get home, you can check out a spa that offers Thalassotherapy or get some organic sea salts to bath in as a home therapy. Be sure to drink plenty mineral water every day. If you would like more help with a specific type of detox or cleansing, we offer colon-hydro therapy, individual medical analysis



and a program to suite each person. Meanwhile, be part of the solution in keeping our waters clean so the healing will continue.

CARLOS VIANA, Ph. D. is an Oriental Medical Doctor (O.M.D.) having studied in Shanghai, China; a Board Cert. Clinical Nutritionist (C.C.N.), a fellow member of the Board Certified Association of Addiction Professionals (C.Ad.), the Chairperson of the Latin American Committee of the International Academy of Oral Medicine and Toxicology (IAOMT), a Rejuvenating Cell Therapist and specializes in Anti-Aging Medicine, has a weekly radio program, writes and lectures extensively. For information: VIANA NATURAL HEALING CENTER NV, Kibaima 7, Aruba, TEL: 585-1270 FAX: 585-4789, Web Sight: www.vianaheal.com

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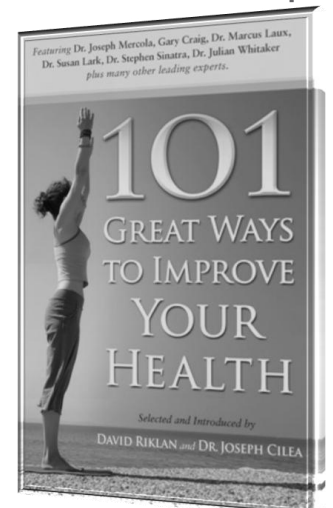
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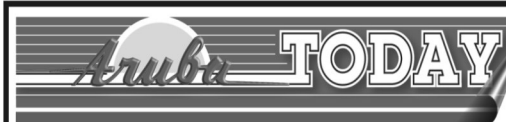
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Why the Health Care Bill Could Be Repealed

Sean Trende

The punditocracy has recently been consumed with a debate over whether or not the Republicans will be able to repeal the recently-passed health care bill. Outside of self-professed conservative pundits, the conventional wisdom seems to be that the odds are prohibitively against repeal (or significant modification).

This Politico article typifies the attitude of those who doubt that repeal can be effectuated. It argues that the current outrage over the health care bill is merely a part of a "familiar pattern since New Deal days: Government programs from Social Security to Medicare that were launched amid incendiary arguments within a short time became sacrosanct - protected by a bipartisan consensus that was nowhere to be found at passage."

This is certainly one possible outcome for the President's health care bill, but it isn't the only one. Here is why repeal is a real possibility.

1. This bill is substantively different than Social Security and Medicare.

My colleague Jay Cost made a critical point a few days ago:

Franklin Roosevelt and Lyndon Johnson made use of an ingenious social insurance system - promoting the idea that we all pay in today to take out tomorrow. It was consistent with American individualism. It was simple. It was intuitive. It was bipartisan. Obama's new system has none of those virtues. This feature is what makes repealing or substantially modifying Social Security and/or Medicare so difficult. They are entitlements that are broadly given to the middle class, who also pays for them. To the extent these programs are redistributive, that redistribution is largely hidden.

Everyone, from the poorest member of society to Bill Gates, has some stake in Social Security and Medicare.

By the time a member of the middle class retires at age 65, he will have likely paid tens of thousands of dollars into the Social Security system. He expects to get that money back. The same goes for Medicare, which is funded by a smaller tax than Social Security (though unlike Social Security, that tax is not subject to an annual income cap), and is similarly available to all elderly Americans. In other words, cutting Social Security or Medicare requires taking something away from the middle class that they've already paid for. That's obviously hard to do.

While this bill was intended to be a broad middle class entitlement in the mold of Social Security and Medicare, it is fundamentally different. It is funded by a variety of mechanisms that target specific stakeholders. It is paid for primarily by Medicare beneficiaries and the wealthy, neither of whom are likely to receive the benefits. While beneficiaries will have a stake in the program, it will not be as substantial as their stake in their Medicare or Social Security benefits, which they have already essentially "bought" by the time they approach retirement.

Moreover, this bill will have a smaller number of beneficiaries, especially at first. Democrats like to brag that in the weeks after the bill has passed, the ban on pre-existing conditions will be lifted for children, adults with pre-existing conditions will be allowed to participate in high-risk insurance pools, and adults will be able to maintain their children on their insurance until those children turn twenty-six.

These are popular features of the bill, but I'm not certain how broad their

appeal is. Most people do not have pre-existing conditions that they know of, nor do they have children with pre-existing conditions (for whatever it is worth, I fall personally in the former category, and via my son into the latter). I've not seen statistics on the number of parents who would like to keep their children on their insurance policies, but I imagine the number is relatively small compared to the vast number of people who are eligible for Medicare or Social Security.

Indeed, the central difficulty that the bill will run up against is the same one it has run up against all along: most people already have health insurance, and most people are basically happy with their insurance. While a number of Americans will enjoy receiving subsidies for purchasing health care on the exchanges (in 2014), many of the 30 million Americans who will be covered by this bill are Americans who could buy health insurance today, but choose not to.

For a comparatively small number of obvious beneficiaries, the bill creates a number of real losers as well: People who participate in Medicare Advantage, healthy people who would rather not purchase insurance, and people whose employers stop providing health insurance as a result of the bill, to name a few examples.

2. This bill is more similar to government programs that Congresses have repealed.

Programs that are perceived as broad middle class entitlements do tend to become untouchable. With programs that are perceived as social insurance or redistribution mechanisms, though, the track record is spottier. The idea that Congress never repeals programs once they have begun is unsupported

by history. Congress repealed a large portion of the New Deal in the 1940s, and substantial portions of the Great Society were gutted as well; there is a reason that the WPA, CCC, and OEO are referred to only in history books.

Indeed, even the idea that Medicare is sacrosanct is belied by the substantial cuts to Medicare Advantage to fund the present health bill. Congress also substantially transformed a relatively unpopular redistributive entitlement program in 1996, when it reworked AFDC. But the biggest elephant in the room is alluded to at the end of the Politico article: The Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act of 1988. It passed 360 to 66 in the House and by a similarly large margin in the Senate. It was signed into law by President Reagan in June of 1988.

The problems with the bill were many. There wasn't much real demand for the bill, nor was there substantial demand for the benefits it offered, such as a ceiling on doctor bills, larger payments for nursing home care, and a prescription drug benefit. Many people on Medicare already had plans offering these benefits. It was paid for by a surtax on elderly people with incomes over \$35,000, thus removing the traditional Medicare hook that recipients had already paid for the benefit their entire lives. And it was the subject of an intense disinformation campaign by opponents.

The results are legendary. 6,000 members resigned from the AARP in protest of its support of the bill. Congressmen returned home to hordes of angry elderly voters in town hall meetings. Congressman Dan Rostenkowski was chased down the street outside of his office by a mob of angry voters. □

En Colombia

Militar Moncayo se reúne con su familia tras 12 años como rehén de FARC

FLORENCIA, Colombia (AP) - El sargento colombiano Pablo Emilio Moncayo llegó libre el martes a esta ciudad y protagonizó un emotivo encuentro con su familia tras permanecer 12 años cautivo de la guerrilla de las FARC.

Moncayo llegó a bordo de un helicóptero militar a las 5.40 de la tarde (2240GMT). Había sido entregado en la jornada en las selvas colombianas a una comisión del Comité Internacional de la Cruz Roja (CICR), a la senadora Piedad Córdoba y al obispo católico Leonardo Gómez. El suboficial fue secuestrado el 21 de diciembre de 1997 en un remoto puesto militar ubicado en el cerro de Patascosy, suroeste de Colombia, por las rebeldes Fuerzas Armadas revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC).

Vestido con traje militar camuflado y botas negras, Moncayo descendió de la nave e hizo señas a su familia para que no corriera y luego todos se unieron en un abrazo. Gustavo Moncayo, padre del uniformado, María Stella Cabrera, la madre, le entregaron margaritas blancas, mientras las cuatro hermanas le daban besos abrazos en medio de las sonrisas de Moncayo. También abrazó a un montón de niños, entre ellas su hermana Laura Valentina, de seis años, y los hijos de sus hermanas mayores. Moncayo también dirigió un saludo marcial a militares de Florencia, capital del departamento de Caquetá y a unos 380 kilómetros al suroeste de Bogotá, presentes en el aeropuerto. El ex rehén, actualmente de 32 años, no formuló declaraciones de inmediato, pero sí saludó a la prensa desde lejos. □



El sargento del ejército Pablo Moncayo, es abrazado por sus familiares a su llegada al aeropuerto Florencia al sur de Colombia el martes 30 de marzo de 2010 después que fuera liberado por las FARC tras más de 12 años de cautiverio. (AP Photo/William Fernando Martínez)

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